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Alumnus Provides Support for STEM Programs

Planned gift will award UM math and science departments more than \$2 million

JULY 22, 2018 BY BILL DABNEY



Ken and Carol Lackey enjoy time at home with Hunter. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – Having served as a university president among other high-level positions in Oklahoma, **University of Mississippi** alumnus Ken Lackey, of Tulsa, knows firsthand the importance of private support to public institutions of higher learning.

“I’m at a point in my life where I needed to make decisions about my estate, so after a thorough review of my plan and provisions for my wife and daughter, I thought of Ole Miss,” said Lackey, who with his wife, Carol, recently designated UM

as the beneficiary of a planned gift estimated at more than \$2 million. The gift will support the **Department of Mathematics** and science departments within the **College of Liberal Arts**.

“Science and mathematics have played an important role in my life and today, science, technology, engineering and mathematics are both the current underpinning and future of our society,” said Lackey, who earned a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Ole Miss in 1965, followed by a master’s degree in business administration from the University of Texas at Austin.

“Ole Miss is lucky to have a chancellor who is grounded in and committed to STEM. I wanted to make a commitment which would place my goals in parallel with his vision for the university.”

Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter says the feeling is mutual.

“We are fortunate to have esteemed alumni like Ken Lackey who know how private support strengthens our academic programs as well as our standing among our peer institutions nationwide,” Vitter said. “We greatly appreciate the Lackeys’ passion in designating this generous gift to our great university.”

The Lackeys hope their gift will encourage more individuals to select Ole Miss for the quality of its STEM offerings.

“A gift of this magnitude will help transform our math and science departments by making them more competitive,” said Lee Cohen, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. “Specifically, we will be able to better attract outstanding faculty members.

“Growing the strength of our faculty will help both our research and teaching missions. We are extremely grateful to Ken and Carol for their generosity and support.”

A Jackson native, Lackey enrolled at Ole Miss in 1962 and moved into the B wing of Barr Hall.

“Barr B was a subculture within the university and we had lots of fun,” said Lackey, whose dorm buddies include Netscape founder Jim Barksdale, of Jackson, and Palm Beach, Florida, attorney John Gary. “Even though I joined a fraternity, some of my best personal relationships were made at Barr B.”

At Ole Miss, Lackey received a U.S. Army commission through the **ROTC** and, after graduate school, served two years on active duty, from 1967 to ’69. For his service, the first lieutenant was awarded the Army Commendation Medal.

Lackey is chairman of the board and former CEO and president of the Tulsa-based NORDAM Group, which provides a range of aerospace components, manufacturing and repair services for private, commercial and military aircraft.

Previously, Lackey served as president of the University of Oklahoma at Tulsa and senior vice president of the OU system from 1999 to 2001. He was a member of Gov. Frank Keating’s administration, serving as his chief of staff from 1997 to ’99. From 1995 to 1997, he served as the Oklahoma cabinet secretary of health and human services.

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Campus Briefs

Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children’s play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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Thank You To Our Donors

Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith’s Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school’s first African-American student.

Before his service in state government, Lackey held the position of president of Flint Industries, a privately-owned international company with interests in oil and gas services, manufacturing and commercial construction. Earlier, he held management positions with Skelly Oil and Kin-Ark Corp. He continues to serve on a number of business and community boards in Tulsa.

Carol Lackey, a native of Columbus, Nebraska, graduated from the University of Nebraska and has enjoyed a successful computer career, working for Apple and Sun Microsystems.

In their spare time, the couple enjoys easy weekends at their lake home in northeastern Oklahoma as well as traveling extensively. A fifth trip to Africa is next on the calendar.

The Ken and Carol Lackey Excellence Fund, a scholarship established by the Lackeys in 2012, is open to gifts from individuals and organizations. To contribute, send checks with the endowment name noted in the memo line to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655; or visit <http://www.umfoundation.com/makeagift>.

For information on supporting STEM programs at Ole Miss, contact Denson Hollis, executive director of development, at 662-915-5092 or dhollis@olemiss.edu.

Planned gifts award donors membership in the 1848 Society, named for the year the university welcomed its first students. The society recognizes those who thoughtfully provide for the university through bequests and deferred gifts.

For information on including Ole Miss in long-term estate planning, contact Sandra Guest at 662-915-5208 or sguest@olemiss.edu.

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“James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier,” a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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